

**Dunkin Donuts Public Art Selection Panel Meeting**  
**Final Presentations and Selection**  
**Tuesday, January 30, 2007**  
**Rhode Island Convention Center Conference Room**  
**One Sabin St**  
**Providence, RI**

**Introductions & Updates from: Dorothy Bocian, RISCA Public Art Selection Panel facilitator. A special note: several applicants expressed their preference for presenting to the panel without the attendance of other applicants. Several members of the public were in attendance at this open meeting.**

**singleSPEEDdesign proposal:**

**Site: The Exterior South Plaza of the Dunkin Donuts Center.**

**Proposal: singleSPEEDdesign proposes an interactive installation called the Cloud Canopy. Soft cloudlike forms would be mounted on thin columns anchored in cobblestone. There would be a sound element and after dark a light element. Lights would react to weather patterns and sound would respond to people as they move through the plaza and as they walk under the cloud forms.**

**The group described the history and experience of their business. Their work deals a lot with light and sustainable materials. They**

recently completed an interactive sculpture at the Cooper Hewitt Museum. Area C, a local composer and recording artist, will partner with them on the interactive sound component.

singleSPEEDdesign described their proposal as an interactive urban-scale landscape. They explained their reasoning for focusing on the south plaza corner. That spot is a point of convergence of multiple walking paths and driving routes connecting different parts of the city. There is also very little green or open space for a wide area around the Convention Center. This proposal provides the experience of a landscape or an open vista where there is none.

The cloud structures would be made stable through u-channels, diagonally mounted columns, and the light and sound would be activated through a self-contained wireless system. The cloud canopy would become a visible interaction with the weather. On a cloudy day, the light and sound would simulate raindrops. On a hot day there would be blue lights and soothing chiming sounds. On a windy day, the movement of air would activate lights streaming across the canopy. On a bright day there would be patterns that occur within the structure itself. The canopy will also serve as an invitation for pedestrians to enter and use the plaza. The cloud forms would respond to people's actions through light and sound. They described the plaza as becoming an "Urban stage" where people could affect the installation through their own actions. The sound element would be subtle, focused inward towards the space below

each cloud and could be heard only by people as they stood directly underneath each cloud canopy. The cloud forms would contain LED lights, speakers and sensors. The sounds would not be continuous, but would only respond to movement and the lights would respond to weather. The system would use proven wireless technology from a single power source. Tellart, an interactive technology firm based in Providence, would be contracted for the technology design and installation.

The project budget is flexible. The reuse of existing planters and benches may help save money. They may also be able to coordinate with the construction company on paving plans and save money there.

Questions and comments from panel members:

Panel: Tellart receives a huge amount of the commission.

SinglespeedDesign: This fee includes fabrication and consultation costs as well as all LED elements, the connections of the lights to physical structure, etc.

Panel: The poles might not meet ADA requirements.

SSD: The cloud structures are aluminum so they are not extremely heavy and can be moved to accommodate ADA requirements.

Panel: The mounds may also pose ADA issues. Also, will people actually want to sit on concrete mounds?

SSD: They have designed seating like this before and the mounds are ergonomic and comfortable. The mounds are also the most

**cost-effective way to address structural issues.**

**Panel: Is there a risk of dirt and damage if birds were to nest in the cloud structures?**

**SSD: There are weep holes in all of the rods for water and dirt to wash through.**

**Panel: Will the LED lights stand up to snow and sleet? How will the lighting stand up to the elements?**

**SSD: Tellart has tested the technology outdoors and the project budget includes testing for Providence weather. Each rod has 6 colors – full spectrum LED's – in enclosed units. Each unit is like a light bulb and can be individually replaced at \$50 each. Each unit should last for about 15 years. The project calls for 2100 separate LED rods and the budget leaves room to purchase an additional 400.**

**Panel: Does Tellart give a warranty for the rods?**

**SSD: Not sure – will have to check into that.**

**Panel: Is there a projected cost for yearly maintenance?**

**SSD: There is no firm number for that, but Tellart is a local company and they charge by the hour.**

**Panel: There should be a greater amount set aside for contingency.**

**SSD: Because the project is a modular design and the spacing is tight, they could increase the contingency by trimming the size and shape of the cloud structures.**

**Panel: How loud will the sound element of the piece be?**

**SSD: The speakers are 3" diameter mounted at the top of the columns that support the cloud canopies. They will be programmed so that sound will activate and then immediately fade with each movement.**

**The sound will only be continuous when people are moving continuously. The sound can also be adjusted.**

**Panel: What if things get thrown or blown up onto the top of the grid work.**

**SSD: The Tellart Company has done projects not unlike this in the past. The rods themselves will not break unless they are violently attacked. All of the voltage is above pedestrian level are enclosed so it is not a danger to people if they try to shimmy up a pole. However, the height of the canopies is reachable by a ladder or crane.**

**Panel: The budget for pavers seems low.**

**SSD: That number is for just the paving at each of the mounds. The construction company probably already has plans for paving the entire site which they can partner with.**

**Panel: The demolition of that area is not currently planned as part of the overall construction plan. The paving would have to be added to the project budget. Also, they may need to configure the pieces to allow for future construction work near that site.**

**SSD: Originally the plan was to anchor the cloud formations to the side of the building. If they returned to this design plan it could solve those access issues as well as ADA compliance. There is a lot of flexibility in the design.**

**Panel: Could the sound aspect of the project relate to the activities happening in the convention center?**

**SSD: There could be sounds added at any time to address special interests.**

**Lorna Jordan proposal:**

**Site: The Exterior South Plaza of the Dunkin Donuts Center.**

**Proposal: Lorna Jordan proposes a “Wave Theater” that would connect people to the urban environment through elements of nature.**

**Ms. Jordan approaches her projects as “theatres”. Her projects activate the environment and encourage communities to participate in them. She is particularly interested in water, physically and conceptually. She has done many projects around Seattle which redirect and recycle water. The installations incorporate natural elements such as plants, and recycled materials including marble and granite. Her urban installations attempt to create rooms within cities, where people can convene during the day and that transform the city at night.**

**For the Convention Center Plaza she wanted to activate the space as a green oasis. She considered the confluence of the three rivers of Providence: The Providence, the Pawtuxet and the Woonasquatucket. She also wanted her proposal to refer to the lights of Waterfire and the lights of the Convention Center itself.**

**Ms. Jordan’s “Wave Theater” utilizes wave forms in reference to the rivers, and even “the wave” that happens at stadium shows. In her installation, the pedestrian pathways mirror the paths of the three**

rivers and there are wavelike spaces for public seating. She proposes an installation that expands upon the city's green space, with wavelike trellises that imitate the natural ripples and reflections of light on water as well as the banners and activities within the stadium. The canopies of the trellises would be rimmed with blue LED lights, creating a nighttime glow. There would also be lantern forms on the wall of the Convention Center that would illuminate the surface of the building. Vines would grow up the trellises, adding warmth and color. There would be a green island for several trees at the center of the plaza which would provide shade and movement. Groundcover would ideally be evergreen, but has not been selected yet. She would seek native vines and plants for the project.

Questions and comments from panel members:

Panel: How do the back wall and the trellises work together?

Lorna Jordan: She wants to enliven the back wall because it is currently big and blank. Panel: How does she address the logistics of the electrical, drainage and structural aspects of her project?

LJ: The engineering services would have to be arranged. The structural engineering is included in the budget but civil and electrical may have to be added.

Panel: How would the plantings be maintained – especially those on top of the trellises?

LJ: The plan is fairly maintenance free – may need mulch for the plantings and occasional power washing for the trellises.

Panel: Could be an educational component to the piece explaining

her references to the rivers, etc?

LJ: There could be a plaque or comparable. She would want it to be informative without being too didactic.

Panel: (did not record the question)

LJ: There is flexibility in the design, plan and budget – such as simplifying the back wall. The piece is ADA compliant – there are no undulations in the pavement of or stairs, etc. She would ensure that the entrance and egress lighting is adequate and there could be pathway lighting and sight lighting

Panel: One member remarked that the Convention Center would have to have this kind of additional lighting. One panelist also explained that the existing trees would have to be replaced because they are not currently doing well.

LJ: Contingency is built into each budget line item. There is a group called the Carlson Company in California that she bid the project with. She is willing to look into local companies for fabrication – but would probably go with the company that did the original bid.

Panel: Will the plants under the trellises get enough light?

LJ: She could utilize shade plants. She explained that very specific plants can be selected for specific effects such vines that have a limited growth pattern, etc. The mesh of the canopies would allow enough light for plants to grow, yet it would also cool the sitting areas. She explained that she would love to pull her design around to the front of the Convention Center – but it seems that would not be within the budget.

Panel: Will there be a problem with cleaning bird droppings, litter,

**etc.**

**LJ: Power washing would clean the mesh.**

**Panel: Would it be possible to make the canopies so that they can tilt and make cleaning easier.**

**LJ: Explained that she budgeted for a very high priced mesh. It could be ordered with various hole sizes - she has several options to choose from. Ms. Jordan concluded by explaining that she is currently busy on several projects – but she has time to jump on this project right away.**

**Ann Gardner, proposal:**

**Site: Front Exterior and Primary Entrance to Dunkin' Donuts Center**

**Proposal: Ann Gardner proposes a mosaic tile installation either at the front entrance or along the semi-circular brick feature at the front of the building.**

**Ms. Gardner explained that the material she would use is called smalti – a Byzantine glass that is colored all the way through so that it is not easily destroyed through chipping or scratching and is virtually maintenance free. The glass she would use is from Franz Meyer in Munich because it is a beautiful and durable product. She creates her mosaics from prints that include patterns. Plywood plugs would be put in the wall, allowing the tiles to be flush with the brick of the façade. She felt that a piece at the front of the arena would be celebratory, creating a distinctive appearance for the main entrance.**

**Ms. Gardner attempts to make all of her work relate. Her goal with this proposal would be to create works that are of gallery or museum quality, but on a huge scale.**

**Her 1st proposal would be placed to the side and above the front entrance. The tiles would incorporate gold leaf covered by a thin layer of glass. They are impervious to water, heat and cold and can last forever. The quality of the tiles would change according to light and angle. They would be held by a stainless steel metal frame fabricated in Seattle. The triangle shaped frame and the glass would be fabricated in Seattle with assistants in her studio and then shipped to Providence where Ms. Gardner would rent a studio for a month to assemble and complete the piece. She would be open to the idea of holding open studio days for the public to view her technique. Upon completion, the piece would be installed at the entrance with the help of locally-hired assistants. She created both designs to be classic and as long-lived and durable as the materials. The frame would be subtle, only big enough to protect the edges of the glass.**

**Questions and comments from panel members:**

**Panel: Does the design reference the gold domes in Providence such as the old stone bank?**

**Ann Gardner: The triangularity of the piece feels like an arrow pointing to the entrance of the building. It evokes sunrise and sunset.**

**Panel: Does it seem to be crowded in the corner space near the**

entrance?

**AG:** The intention is for it to create a signature for the entrance to the building. It would become a symbol for the Dunkin Donuts Center.

**Panel:** Will this compete with the Dunkin Donuts symbol? There is a big wall in the South Plaza that could take a piece like this and perhaps there it would not compete for the building's identity.

**AG:** The intention is for it to be a signature piece. She specifically chose the location and does not feel that it is crowded in too small a space. She feels it is more intimate there, rather than lost against a big wall.

**Ms. Gardner's 2nd Proposal** is for a tile mosaic along the semi-circular brick feature at the front of the building. This would be a red, celebratory tile mosaic, with a repeated pattern derived from prints - which represent a universal language. The scale would be 55 ft across and 68 ft at its highest point. This installation would give the viewer the feeling of being enveloped by the mosaic when sitting on bench at the front of it. It would be a nice meeting place and the materials would feel active, alive and inviting. There would be grass in the center of the curved wall with plants and then the three flag pole. She welcomes the idea that her pieces would become an integral part of the convention center environment, incorporating trees, flags, and plants added over time.

**Questions and comments from panel members:**

**Panel:** There are some steps and a rail that have been added to the

design of the top of curved wall that would have to be taken into account.

AG: Explained that she is willing to revise her idea to take those elements into account. Panel: The triangular piece would be more of an object on the wall. This proposal is more of a landmark at the site.

AG: It would feel like a space to congregate – people would be able to meet each other at the red wall at the Dunkin Donuts Center. The piece could be experienced on a more intimate level as well, with lots of detail to appreciate when viewed close up.

Panel: There is already lighting at the site for the flags. I would be easy to add lighting to illuminate the mosaic.

**Stephen Knapp, proposal:**

**Site:** The Back Wall at the Exterior South Plaza of the Dunkin Donuts Center.

**Proposal:** Stephen Knapp proposes a light installation or a “Lightpainting” using dichroic glass to reflect on the back wall of the south plaza.

Mr. Knapp explained that he attempted to create a signature piece for the Convention Center. He has experience creating large scale ceramic and mosaic tile murals. Now he specializes in “Lightpaintings” which he has been commissioned to create for the past 30 years. He works with dichroic glass to split light beams into

prismatic colors. His proposals utilize a considerable amount of electricity – MR16 50 or 75 watt bulbs. Halogen lights are also an option for outdoor lighting. These can last for 6,000 hours or about a year. His proposed light projections would fill the entire south plaza wall. The piece would be most prominent in the evening after the sun sets. In the daytime the pieces of glass would create soft shadows. The Convention Center could make choices about when the piece is activated. It could stay on all the time and fade out naturally with the sunrise or it could be programmed to illuminate at certain times. He could create a light installation using the existing wall, but he also proposes covering the wall which he estimates would cost about \$215,000. Another option is to cover the existing wall with a metal skin which would bring the cost down to about \$50,000. The budget is flexible in this way. He explained that as a Massachusetts artist, he is enthusiastic about doing a project in his “back yard”. He is unsure of what the name of the piece would be; explaining that he usually creates a name sometime during the actual creation process. For now it is just a “lightpainting.” He explained that part of his budget is the rental of a studio space for 6 months to a year. This space would have to be large enough to accommodate the scale of the south plaza wall. He could do the actual fabrication in his own studio.

Questions and comments from panel members:

Panel: The budget estimate for studio time seems very high.

Stephen Knapp: Explained that this is just an estimate, but any overrun in this figure would likely go towards the hiring of studio

**assistants, utility costs, etc.**

**Panel: There was some concern about the idea of replacing or re-facing the wall. Would his idea be compromised if it was done on the existing wall?**

**SK: He would ideally like to put a new surface on the wall. The drama of the piece would be affected by the existing surface. He might also want to make adjustments to the overall lighting on the building.**

**Panel: Could the reflection of the sun on the glass during the day be problematic?**

**SK: Sunlight can play off the glass, but generally will not be blinding or harsh. On the contrary, the glass creates shadows that subtly follow the arch of the sun. His vision is to create a dynamic “painting” for the space.**

**Panel: Is the piece dim-able?**

**SK: Dimming would not be necessary because the piece will automatically fade in and out as the sun rises and sets.**

**Panel: Would trees in the courtyard create a problem?**

**SK: If the plan was to fill the entire courtyard with trees it could become a problem. A few trees would add to the sense of discovery to the piece.**

**Panel: Is there any chance that pedestrians could tamper with the glass or be hurt by it?**

**SK: The lowest pieces or dichroic glass would be well out of reach.**

**Panel discussion and deliberation:**

After the presentations by each finalist, the panel walked to the site. They also visited the restaurant that overlooks the plaza in order to consider how each proposal would be viewed from that vantage point.

The discussion began with consideration of the proposal by SingleSPEEDdesign. The panel loved the design and described it as “ethereal and poetic”. They felt that the piece would have a range of experiential possibilities. Their biggest concern was that the group did not budget enough for their time and effort. The bulk of the budget was allocated to the Tellart Company for consultation and fabrication and even that amount seemed low for the scope of the project. The panel also worried that the mounds which would also be the supports and the sitting areas would not be ADA compliant and to change those would dramatically change the project. The panel felt that the proposal was perhaps the most beautiful and imaginative, but the least practical. One panelist commented that the Convention Center has the expertise to operate the technology of the piece. They have staff to operate score boards and other digital displays and they could certainly manage the programming or adjustments that the public art piece might need. Panelists were concerned that the installation might limit the use of the courtyard for any future assemblies or gatherings. It would be difficult to do a promotional event in the plaza with the cloud structures in the space. Other panelists reminded that the sound and light elements could be turned off for any events in the space. The panel repeated that it is a

beautiful and intellectual proposal but perhaps not doable. Some panelists felt that the mounds were not so necessary to the success of the overall installation and that there may be possibilities for modifying the design. The panel asked whether a completion bond is required as part of the State's contract with the artist? It is not. The panel would have liked to have more information about the Tellart Company since such a huge portion of the budget would be paid to them. The panel felt that this was the riskiest proposal of the bunch. They loved the interactivity and felt that the presenting group of artists is talented, exciting, young and innovative. However, they were not completely comfortable with the presentation and worried that there are too many logistical concerns.

Next the panel discussed Lorna Jordan's proposal. They loved the idea of a green landscape in the midst of the city. They were less enthusiastic about her overall design than with SingleSPEED's and they hoped she might be willing to leave out the design on the back wall. They felt that leaving out the back wall might also reduce the size of the project and stretch the budget further. They worried that the space is too small for the scope of her proposal and wondered if she might remove at least one of the canopies. They had some concerns about the effects of the soil against the back wall of the plaza and repeated that the design on the back wall felt conceptually very separate from the design elements in the center of the plaza and they wondered if she could make revisions to eliminate that back wall design. They had some concerns about the scope of the Jordan

piece similar to concerns about the SingleSPEED proposal, specifically that the project might be too big for the budget. However, natural light elements and the shade area in the plaza and the way the space would change over time seemed more successful in the Jordan piece in terms of how people would use and experience the space. The sitting spaces seemed more realistic, it could be used for gatherings and special events if the grade is flat and there are places to sit. The proposal would completely change the plaza and make it feel less like cold concrete. They preferred the idea of keeping that back wall dark focusing on the use of the plaza. They felt that the proposal provides the best reuse of the space and it would become a public amenity. There was some question as to whether the numerous columns and obstructions would be problematic in terms of building egress and pedestrian traffic. The response was that the paths and seating within the design accommodate passage and traffic flow. The environment of the piece is serene and inviting. In comparison, SingleSPEED's proposal feels like sculptural whereas Lorna Jordan's feels more like a garden.

The panel commented that they love Ann Gardner's work, but they were not inspired by the specific proposals she presented for the Dunkin Donuts Center. They hoped she would present proposals for the plaza or the front surface along the ramp that will be installed at the front of the building. They appreciated the fact that she presented two proposal ideas. The triangle piece looked like it would get lost in

the space where planned to install it. The curved piece seemed like it had more potential, but they worried that her design would not be as strong with the revisions to the shape of that curved wall and the addition of the railing at the top of it. They agreed that there is potential for that proposal to become an object that is a signature piece for the building. They discussed the possibility of spending the remainder of her budget on modifications to the wall - filling in the ridges and moving the railing. The panel felt, however, that for the overall budget, that localized proposal was not enough of a transformation of the space. They were also disappointed that such a huge portion of the budget would go to the Franz Mayer Company in Germany. They felt that the proposal is beautiful, but not compelling in comparison to the other proposals.

The panel was very drawn to Steve Knapp's proposal and the image he presented for their consideration. They felt that "if there is any hope for that back wall" this proposal was it. They felt that the piece would have wide appeal and would be very accessible to the patrons of the Center. Their main concern was that the budget would not justify the end product. They had major concerns about public response to an installation consisting of glass and light for a budget of over \$400,000. The visual impact of the piece would be high, though it is limited to evening hours. The view from the elevated restaurant would be great. It would be a huge attraction at night and it would have a real "wow" factor. The panel returned to the issue of the budget and could not justify specific budget items or the overall

**budget. They commented on the \$5,000 travel budget, though he lives in Worcester. They also had concerns about the re-surfacing of the wall. They agreed that the piece would require a clean and beautiful wall and there were concerns about any plans for manipulating the wall. There was disappointment that he did not mention any plans to engage the public in his creation process. They worried that this piece, for all its attractiveness, would ultimately be too similar to pieces he has done many times before.**

**A preliminary vote unanimously removed Ann Gardner's piece from consideration.**

**Continued discussion:**

**The SingleSPEED proposal seems too risky. Steven Knapp's proposal would be a crowd pleaser, but the panel felt that for the budgeted amount, he does not push the envelope far enough. They would prefer a piece that has the same level of effect during the day and evening hours. They felt that Lorna Jordan's proposal had so many ideas that it needed to be simplified. But they also felt that she seemed very flexible and her idea had very compelling elements. Lorna's piece has impact for 24 hours each day. She has a proven track record in the field of public art. There was general agreement that the back wall detracted from the overall proposal. There was also concern that she had not included demolition of the existing boxes and benches into her budget. Taking out one or more canopy could make up that difference, or if she was able to work with the**

construction company soon they may be able to do that work. The Stephen Knapp proposal still leaves an ugly concrete area for the south plaza. Lorna's gives the public a green space, a meeting place, and a permanent amenity. The panel felt that her proposal would give the most to the public, for their use and enjoyment. The panel was given added confidence with her presentation of projects that she has completed in other places. The panel concluded that they had "lots of love" for the SingleSpeed Design proposal and found it difficult to not give the group a chance to prove themselves and create something so unusual. But they felt that Lorna Jordan's proposal presented the most effective transformation of the space and her presentation was truly exceptional.